

CENTRE AGRO-ENTREPRISE
Mali Sustainable Economic Growth

**CONSULTATION REPORT ON THE IMPROVEMENT
OF THE MONITORING-EVALUATION SYSTEM**
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Introduction

The Objective of the Consultation :

The goal of the consultation on the improvement and validation of the monitoring-evaluation system is:

- to evaluate the existing monitoring-evaluation system and approaches, taking account of the various activities ;
- to evaluate the information available in order to establish a link between performance- and impact-indicators ;
- to make best use of the information available in order to evaluate the impact indicators ;
- to improve the CAE data-bases on clients/partners and training ;
- to validate the CAE's performance-indicator information collection strategy.

Methodology and process of the consultation :

The consultation on the improvement of the Centre Agro-Entreprise's monitoring-evaluation systems took place as follows :

1. Analysis of the documentation made available to the consultant (see Annex F for list) ;
2. Diagnosis of the CAE monitoring-evaluation system ;
3. Group Interviews with the various CAE Units : Commercial Development, Training-Communication, Political Analysis, Partnership Fund, Administration and Information ;
4. Field trip (28-31 May 2000) for interviews ; at Niono, with the President of Nyeta-Conseil (Coordinator of the Pilot Rice-Testing Project) ; at Koutiala, with a cereal dealer who had received CAE training; and at Sikasso, group interviews with AMATEVI (subcontractor for the Potato Conservation Test), Crédit-Initiative SA (service provider in the Mango Export operation) and the Sikasso Mango Exporter Pool ;
5. Work sessions with the Directeur of CAE ;
6. Oral pre-report session.

Terminology and Attempt at Definition :

A preliminary requirement is a concise definition of the notions of monitoring and evaluation, given the variety of interpretations encountered during the consultation.

Monitoring is the continuous surveillance of the execution of a project in relation both to agreed deadlines and the use made by the project beneficiaries of the resources, infrastructure and services placed at their disposal. It makes it possible to supply the management of a project and other relevant parties with indicators of progress (or lack of progress) toward the realisation of the project's objectives. It facilitates the early identification of the real or potential strengths and flaws of the project and thus of the adjustments required. For monitoring to be a function essential to management, activities must be properly planned.

Basic data, performance indicators and results, mechanisms and procedures including field visits, meetings of the interested parties and the drafting of systematic reports are indispensable to effective monitoring.

Evaluation is a exercise of limited duration intended to systematically and objectively assess the relevance, performance, effectiveness and impact (expected and unexpected) of a project relative to the original objectives. It can be performed during the execution of the project, generally at the half-way stage, and can be used to validate the assessment arrived at by monitoring. It also makes it possible to assess signs of the likely success or failure of the project. A post-project evaluation makes it possible to determine its effects, and whether these are likely to be permanent. Both monitoring and evaluation must be pre-planned.

The Centre Agro-Entreprise (CAE) :

The Centre Agro-Entreprise is the agency carrying out a project financed by USAID Mali and involving Chemonics International Inc, Fintrac Inc and Winrock International. The CAE is one of the partners of the USAID-Mali 'Sustainable Economic Growth' (SEG) team.

The specific objectives of the CAE are:

- Strengthening the private sector's capacity to identify new markets and broaden existing markets for raw or processed agricultural produce, in order to improve the competitiveness of Malian agro-businesses, in the perspective of sustainable economic growth ;
- Identification and promotion of produce having a competitive advantage on the national, regional or international markets, using a branch-oriented approach (production-processing-marketing) ;
- Making reliable information on existing and potential markets, products and processing methods available to agro-businesses for their development.

The internal organisation of the CAE has three main components :

- promotion of the livestock/meat, cereal and alternative product branches ;
- development of agro-businesses ;
- reform of sectorial policy.

These three components are assisted by the Partnership Fund, whose main purpose is to facilitate the subcontracting of service-provision, training, demonstrations and technical activities requested by the CAE's clients. The Information Unit makes available to agro-businesses data on regional and world prices, production techniques and suitable processing technology.

I - DIAGNOSIS OF CAE MONITORING-EVALUATION SYSTEM

The consultant had first to undertake a diagnosis/analysis of the Monitoring-Evaluation Section of the Information Unit, making use of the CAE monitoring and evaluation system, the various forms for the collection of data, and analysis of data-bases, strategic workplans, quarterly and annual activity reports, study-monitoring systems, client management, etc. The results are recorded in the conclusions.

1.1 FINDINGS

1.1.1: The strategy for monitoring-evaluation of the CAE's activities :

This strategy was worked out in November 1999, and relates to the project Work Plan for the second year. It is essentially based on the management of CAE clients and describes the contents of the client/partner data-collection instruments, the various spheres of activity monitored and evaluated and the use of the different forms designed by the section. Greater emphasis seems to be given to the instruments and their content than to the methodology underpinning their use.

Though this strategy was formulated with the goal of facilitating the drafting of periodic reports, it makes no systematic reference to the strategic workplan, which was worked out by participatory methods, and in which the activities of each Unit are set out in detail, in well-defined sequences, and the various responsibilities are allocated. Nor does the strategy refer to the various markers on which the sequential evaluations are based, or to the indicators set out in the strategic plan (it is true that, in the plan, the expected results are not always clearly specified). Moreover, the operational monitoring plan appears to leave out certain things, such as the Unit support procedures, the updating of data-bases (the data are incomplete), and the rational exploitation of these data-bases for statistical purposes.

Given their current structure, these instruments do not allow feedback to reach the various persons responsible for the project in such a way that they can monitor or assure proper management of the development of the project. They are not exhaustive and contain only basic information on the CAE's clients and potential partners.

At this stage of the analysis, two facts should be highlighted :

- a) The level and volume of the activities of the Centre at the time when these instruments were created made it impossible either to research the instruments in greater depth and specify their structure in greater detail, or to design more suitable ones. The design of the forms should, logically, be undertaken by those responsible for the relevant activities within the CAE, so that they can accurately define objectives and bring to bear the precision necessary if the data is to be useful in relation to the data-bases; if this is not done, the data-bases themselves will be useless. A data-base is not an end in itself. It should be a part of the information system of the CAE, and should be established on the basis of users' needs, the users being first and foremost the operational units and the project head. Design of a data-base and of the instruments used to build it thus requires close collaboration between the designer and the users ;

- b) Information on unfolding and content of activities is not reaching the monitoring and evaluation office on a systematic basis. During group interviews, many reasons for this were given: the many suggestions made by the technical team to that office have not always been implemented; data reaching the office has not always been processed; there has been little feedback; the head of the monitoring-evaluation office is insufficiently qualified; his role should go beyond that of receiving the data supplied by the technical staff, so that he can advise and orient the technical staff and thus allow them to take a more active role in building the system itself; he should also make the monitoring-evaluation process more dynamic by showing greater leadership. The head of the office is perceived more as an overseer or giver of orders than as collaborator whose job is to assist decision-making and orientation. Non-availability on the part of technical staff and procedural weaknesses are two problems that have been particularly emphasised in explanation of the office's being under-informed.

1.1.2: The Design of the Monitoring-Evaluation System :

The data-collection forms

The forms were intended for the collection of data. This data was originally intended to improve knowledge of clients and partners, ensure better working relations with them, permit regular monitoring and increase the Centre's credibility. They were consequently focused above all on client management.

The forms were regularly filled in at the start of the project. But this stopped some time ago, despite the reminders issued to the technical staff by the head of monitoring-evaluation. This partly explains the lack of data in the data-bases.

The reasons given in the group interviews again concern the unsuitability of the forms. They are considered as information forms or questionnaires to be used for collecting basic data on clients and partners, but do not provide for the monitoring or evaluation of activities undertaken for or with clients. This is due not only to the fact that the system was not established at the beginning of the project, but also to the fact that the minimal information that they do contain is not put to use, is, in fact, useless; it serves only to give an outline of the starting point of collaboration between the CAE and its clients and partners.

a. Identification and registering of new clients :

This mainly concerns the agro-business identification form, whose principal object, besides that of general information concerning the company (name, legal status, sector, main activities, market) is listing its needs in terms of CAE support.

b. Partner identification :

Ditto for the partner identification form; it contains general information about partners.

c. Contact form :

Ditto for this form.

d. Monitoring-evaluation form for processing units :

This form is relatively complete when supplemented by the agro-enterprise identification form. Since the Centre's activities are branch-oriented, further forms dealing with production and marketing units should also have been designed.

e. Basic survey forms :

The three forms shown to the consultant (Training, Publications, Participation in Trade Fairs) are principally intended to check on the relevance of CAE intervention on the client's behalf, to elicit the client's opinions and measure the impact of the intervention on the client.

The data-bases

The structure of the data-bases reflects that of the various forms. To date, they contain only very general information derived from the forms, and are not updated, since no information is forthcoming from those whose business it is to prospect for and contact CAE clients and partners. The data-bases established currently serve as repertoires of agro-businesses categorised by main branch and principal activity. The data-base recording contacts with the CAE registers only the number of contacts made per month ; it has nothing on the objectives of these contacts nor the content of discussion with the clients, and still less on the action to be taken and the deadlines for such action. The data-base on the activities and experience of partners contains little but the name of the partners. The data-base on client/partner data-processing facilities contains only the number of computers per professional category (clients and partners alike).

These data-bases cannot be used in their present state since there are no links between them; their configuration is strictly descriptive and static. The data-base on training is nothing more than the list of those present, categorised by gender, at the CAE training sessions. This list, too, lacks any connection with other data-bases.

The system of monitoring studies and consultations

The office systematically receives the terms of reference and reports of the studies and consultancies financed by the Partnership Fund. But no use is made of this data-base. The office serves as an archive of such reports, sometimes duplicating the activity of other Units in this respect. It is true that the office head assesses the reports in terms of the terms of reference, and takes part in the meetings of the report-approval committee, but this is all retrospective evaluation, and monitoring is entrusted to the head of the Partnership Fund.

1.1.3 : Implementation of the Monitoring-Evaluation System :

In group interviews, certain CAE team-members felt that implementation was taking place on a strictly occasional basis, with reminders becoming more pressing when activity reports on the Centre's activities fell due. There was no feedback on forms filled in and the information was generally not processed. Other members collaborate actively with the monitoring-evaluation office and keep it informed of all their activities, supplying workplans where these exist. The head of monitoring-evaluation is asked to take part where the framing of terms of reference for studies and evaluations is entrusted to a consultant on a committee, but is not systematically informed of activity reports supplied by CAE partners and clients. Though, for the most part, the technical staff admit to having their own methods of monitoring and evaluating their activities, they rarely, if ever, communicate them to the head of monitoring-evaluation ; they tend to think that the problem-area is not so much the recording as the processing of information, and the office-head's inability to advise them and suggest new directions.

To the extent that instruments designed to provide data to the data-bases - instruments adopted by the team as a whole - remain unused, the following questions arise : Are they ill-suited to their function ? Are there procedural problems ? Are their users under-informed ? Or are there communication problems ? Do the various roles need clarifying? Is the monitoring-evaluation function properly understood by the team as a whole, and by the office-head ?

The obstacles and impediments noted in the implementation of the system are above all the method by which performance indicators are defined, and the assimilation of the role of the head of monitoring-evaluation to one of supervisor who primarily evaluates individual performances relative to the workplan. For some, too, it would help if his competences were more clearly defined.

All this indicates that the monitoring-evaluation system is being sidelined. This state of affairs may also be caused at least partly by the position of the monitoring-evaluation office in the current internal structure of the Centre. Moreover, it was noted that the office's mission description does not clearly specify its competences and responsibilities. The implementation systems described in the monitoring-and-evaluation strategy, which was developed in November 1999, are somewhat centralizing in tendency and inhibit the operational practice of monitoring and evaluation. Moreover, the roles of the different coordinators in monitoring and evaluation are not adequately defined.

1.1.4 : Analysis/evaluation of the monitoring-evaluation system :

The CAE's monitoring-evaluation system has never been subject to formal analysis. But there has been much dialogue and discussion, in which advice on improving the system has been lavished on the head of the monitoring-evaluation office. This advice has mostly been of a general kind, focused on leadership/motivation

methods rather than on the substance of his work. There has been, in particular, advice on how to render monitoring-evaluation more dynamic and more pro-active. Nonetheless, there are those who think that the office would benefit from producing occasional bulletins (in addition to the quarterly and annual activity reports) analysing the impact of CAE actions ; these could contain directives and suggest new orientations.

At this point in time, the sidelining of monitoring-evaluation is clear, and there is very little sign of interest in strengthening and integrating it. The work done by the office, production of periodic reports excepted, is sometimes felt to be effectively superfluous in its current form, especially as it relates to advising and orienting the CAE's technical personnel. And the latter have, in any case, established their own system, however limited, of monitoring and evaluation. The head of monitoring-evaluation could at an earlier stage have suggested that these individual systems be developed, so that they in due course underpinned the design of an overall system. The technical staff, on the other hand, are so narrowly focused on achieving their own individual objectives that they don't have time to stand back and are unable to conceive of the CAE as a single entity tending toward a single objective.

The system of evaluation of professional performance and the type of contract (annual) both contribute to the development of a very individualistic working atmosphere. Dialogue and communication founder on this. It is also an indisputable fact that the head of monitoring and evaluation is not omnipotent and does not have all the technical skills required to come to the aid of the technical staff. Where problems lay outside his competence, it would have been helpful to bring in external specialists as consultants ; but for this to happen, he would have had to be in a position to detect such problems.

The findings in the area of implementation are similar: people are failing to communicate, and not just with the head of monitoring-evaluation. People 'communicate because they get on, not because collaboration requires it'. A CAE policy of internal communication should be established, or at least revived, so that there is better circulation of information, not only bottom-up but top-down and laterally.

Evidently, if everyone had to inform everyone else about everything happening in the project, there'd be no time to do anything else. In fact, information should be accessible to everyone, first and foremost functional information (information relating to work) and then motivating information (allowing staff to get a picture of their place in the organisation as a whole). This helps to establish a climate of trust that motivates everyone. What matters is not a conjectural right to information, but making it possible to find out what one needs to. Lack of information and communication often leads to the spread of rumours ; this kind of misinformation can harm the whole project.

Oral is generally more helpful than written information when it comes to making decisions, a fact that should favour communication. An internal news bulletin might also aid motivation. Communicating does not mean simply getting a piece of information, an opinion or a feeling off one's chest, but genuinely sharing it (placing it in common).

1.1.5 : The Positioning of the Monitoring-Evaluation Office :

In addition to the findings concerning the system's design implementation and evaluation, its positioning within the Information Unit tends to exacerbate its sidelining and misreading by most team-members. In its current position, within the Information Unit, the office cannot play its full role of coordinating monitoring and evaluation and supporting the technical staff. The office is effectively closed in on itself. There are exceptions to this rule : occasional support and advice from the UAP and the UFC, for example, in drawing up monitoring methods for training (adding gender and beneficiary profile headings) and suggestions for improving the system. The office cannot therefore be very productive; the 'fuel' (data) on which it is supposed to run is lacking; there is a dearth of information, the instruments are, as noted, defective and unsuitable, and there is little information-gathering. To this should be added the lack of clarity and dynamism in the function itself, such as it is currently defined. All this is exacerbated by the difficulty of communication and interaction both within the Units (with the exception of those constituted by a single staff-member) and within the CAE as a whole.

The groups interviewed felt that the monitoring-evaluation office needed to make enormous progress if it was to become more effective. But there was unanimity on another point too : there are more drawbacks (problems of activity-planning, coordination, communication, dialogue, information, etc.) to the current configuration of the CAE than advantages. It was therefore felt that, to increase its efficiency, a revision was essential, especially given the new strategy of 'team working' adopted in the project's Year II Workplan. This therefore leads us to consider the question of the structure of the Centre, and the extent to which it discourages full recognition of the functions of monitoring and evaluation, coordination, communication and team-work.

1.1.6 : The current structure of the CAE :

The CAE is currently structured 'by product', and comprises very different units. This structure has many advantages : management is not required to coordinate the functions of within a particular unit ; unit responsibilities are clearly defined ; an excellent knowledge of the environment specific to each unit is necessary; and each unit is autonomous. But its disadvantages can have extremely serious consequences.

The structure damages coordination within the organisation as a whole. Most CAE staff agree that it is difficult to ensure coordination within any single unit (with a few exceptions). The main powers are entrusted to the heads of the various units of the Centre, and their goals are expressed rather in terms of individual effectiveness than of the efficiency of the system. The Unit heads themselves are individually oriented towards maximum results rather than optimal use of the resources made available to them, since their performance is judged on the basis of results. The CAE staff reckon that everything apart from the daily tasks required to obtain results is superfluous, and the monitoring-evaluation system is therefore *de facto* sidelined, since it doesn't help to produce results. The result has been that meetings where information was exchanged and lack of communication remedied are now rarer still. The danger is that this considerably reduces the Centre's capacity to seize new opportunities and thus diminishes its 'vision' and flexibility. But these qualities are essential in the current phase of the project, where many tests of improved methods of production, processing and marketing must be carried out in the three main branches of the Malian agro-economy.

The current organisation requires the use of many executives, whose responsibilities and powers are, it is true, clearly defined, but to the detriment of proper coordination of activities. The risk arises of certain functions not being optimized. Currently, agro-economists and finance specialists are somewhat underused. The agro-economists occupy information- and commercial-contact- oriented posts where they are under-employed, and the finance specialists work 'on their own' to strengthen the capacities of the agro-enterprises, whereas they are supposed to be supporting all current test operations.

The current configuration of the CAE may in the long term lead to its pulling itself apart, with the consequent loss of system unity and sometimes of system identity. There would also be the risk of overlapping functions and of total absence of communication between units, if not indeed within units.

It would therefore be advisable for the CAE to adopt a structure that would allow it to implement its declared strategy of prioritizing team-work, since the CAE's services are all, despite their specificity, intended for the same clients, the agro-enterprises. One structure that would better match the goals of the CAE and its teamwork ethic would be the formation of multi-disciplinary teams for each branch. A proposal for a new structure is given in Annex A.

1.2 : SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

1.2.1 : Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy :

The strategy of monitoring and evaluation could be improved by emphasising monitoring-evaluating methodology in :

- Branch-development activities intended to promote the processing, packaging and marketing of agro-produce (with all that this implies in terms of current and planned activities) ;
- Capacity-reinforcement for agro-enterprises (monitoring training sessions, monitoring beneficiaries in terms of changed behaviour, rationalisation of work, etc.) ;
- sectorial policy reform (reorganisation of the distribution circuit for vaccinations, making the IER and LCV autonomous).

The proposed methodology would be based on the system of monitoring and evaluation by indicators. This method implies regular verification of the progress made in a project toward clearly defined short or long-term objectives. It also implies regular feedback to the relevant executives so that they are possessed of the information they require to manage the development of a project. As a first stage, this means designing a system of indicators taking account of the following activities :

- *Clearly defining objectives and their components, which must be measurable by means of indicators.*

Example : ‘Improve the real-time availability of information to businesses on the internal cereal, cattle, and alternative product markets’. Here the components are the various types of information placed at the disposal of CAE clients. This might be information on price, product quantity, market norms, tariffs and regulations, technologies, etc. The indicators would thus each relate to a particular objective-component. The number of subscribers to the Information Unit, which is a sort of aggregate of indicators, would not allow in-depth analysis of the impact of the activities of the UI.

- *Providing modalities of data-collection and record-management, such that the information required for the indicators are compatible with SEG-Mali (USAID) statistics.*

Develop data-collection forms that are adapted and specific to each activity, modelled on the data collection methodology developed at SEG-Mali level not only in content but in type and periodicity. The CAE will thus be able to supply statistics directly to SEG-Mali at intermediary and lower level, since the strategic choice of branches and therefore the programme of the CAE generally matches SEG-Mali results. Though the CAE as a project focuses on more immediate and measurable objectives, it to some extent serves the long-term sectorial objectives of SEG-Mali.

- *Providing the means required for the collection and analysis of the CAE’s data, the drafting of relevant reports and the support of monitoring and evaluation activities.*

Budget for monitoring and evaluation activities. The expense could be assumed by the various interested parties. Moreover, it should be possible for the monitoring-evaluation section to receive occasional support, as the need arises, from the specialists of the different branches covered by the CAE, on new orientations and directives. These would be made on the basis of data-exploitation and gap-analysis.

- *Suggesting methods for integrating monitoring and evaluation results into the decision-making process.*

The implementation of these proposals should be planned, monitored and supervised. This would mean that monitoring and evaluation activities could be viewed as activities in their own right, at the same level as other CAE activities.

1.2.2 : Data-collection forms :

The instruments for the collection of basic data could comprise the various data-forms listed above, enriched as suggested. These forms would be complemented by two forms called ‘Indicator Monitoring Table’ and ‘Indicator Table’ (see below) which would serve as a kind of ‘Instrument Panel’ for the head of monitoring-evaluation.

The form for the identification and registering of new clients should contain additional headings on the internal organisation of the enterprise (level of organisation), the level and qualifications of the staff, the types of technology or techniques used, production and sales levels, sales destinations (for exports), characteristics of products, sales prices, turnover, etc. There should also be a heading on the expected development of the enterprise in order to anticipate future CAE support. The heading 'others' should always carry the instruction 'specify'.

The partner-identification form could be enriched with a section on major specialisation, number of specialists per domain or intervention sector, their status (permanent or recruited in response to tenders), affiliation to an association or an order, and above all the way in which knowledge in the relevant fields is retained or developed.

The commercial-contact form could be improved by adding a section on problems discovered and on the 'person identified as responsible' in relation to any action.

The monitoring-evaluation form on processing units should contain an additional section requiring a brief description of the processing technique, and others on the allocation of tasks and responsibilities (qualification of staff and identifiable training needs), on the site of the infrastructure (close to or distant from the site of production of crop/livestock and availability/lack of means of transport, since these things are decisive for cost price), quality of finished product, and information on any development plans (future perspectives), etc.

The survey forms intended to define basic data and appropriate performance and result indicators at the start of the financial year are used at the end of the year to confirm the assessment made after monitoring and should therefore include questions making it possible to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the project. These surveys should be conducted jointly by the head of the relevant Unit or branch and the head of monitoring-evaluation so that the technical problems that are likely to arise can be effectively dealt with.

1.2.3 : The data-bases :

Since it has proved difficult to exploit the data-bases, their structure must be improved. They should incorporate the detailed headings suggested above for the forms on which they are based, and should be cross-referenced, so that all the information available about a client or partner is available at a glance. It would, for example, be helpful to note the objectives or content of any contacts, the timetable of the actions to be performed or that of the relevant executive, the training sessions that person x of category y belonging to structure z received in order to resolve a particular problem, after a visit from and discussions with CAE executive a on date b, and the impact of collaboration with the CAE.

A data-base on training officers and consultants should also be designed and connected to the training data-base; a further data-base on studies and consultations, succinctly specifying terms of reference, results and effects would also be advisable in order that information on everything that happens in the CAE should be available.

1.2.4 : Monitoring Studies and Consultations :

The monitoring and evaluation office should systematically be provided with the terms of reference of all contracts between the CAE and clients and partners. In this way, it can update the data-bases ; it can also provide a monitoring service for activities, checking whether the indicators set at the beginning of the financial year are still relevant, and, where necessary, requesting the services of relevant specialists.

1.2.5 : Quarterly and Annual Activity Reports :

These reports are well-structured. Their drafting could become the responsibility of the monitoring-evaluation office, if this office could genuinely fulfil its role in progress-monitoring and the coordination, recording, analysis, and interpretation of all incoming data. This could be achieved if: i.) all the instruments are provided and properly used, ii.) the structure of the CAE is revised so as to enhance the cohesion and collaboration of the entire team, iii.) if responsibilities and competences within it are clarified, and iv.) if an efficient system of indicators is established.

II - PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance indicators are targets that must be monitored over the course of the SEG/CAE project. They make it possible to check progress on the basis of results or objectives. They therefore serve to evaluate impacts, results, profitability and inputs (resources). They calibrate the success of the CAE and make it possible, over the course of the project, to identify, as they arise, problems that might affect the achievement of objectives.

Monitoring performance indicators means regularly checking the progress of the project in relation to short, medium and long-term objectives. This monitoring generates the information required to manage the CAE's development.

These indicators present the various hierarchical levels of the project: strategic objective, immediate objective ('goal'), output/results and input/resources.

2.1 : CLASSIFICATION OF INDICATORS

As a rule, indicators are divided into three categories : result, risk and efficiency.

2.1.1 : Result indicators :

At input level, indicators measure the quantity and quality of resources required by the project : finance (project budget), human resources, training and equipment.

At output or product level, indicators measure the quantity and quality of services created or goods delivered. Examples are : the number of partners constituted, the number of hullers and riddles installed in the context of the Niono Rice Test, or the number of cases delivered to Sikasso potato producers.

Goal indicators measure impact : the quality or quantity of results obtained thanks to CAE. This might be, e.g., the improvement in potato conservation or the improvement of gambiaka rice quality.

At strategic-objective level, the SEG/CAE, considered in the context of SEG-Mali, makes an impact at levels higher than those measured by any of the preceding indicators. One such impact might be a sectorial tendency resulting from SEG/CAE activity. Others might include the increase in value-added in certain economic branches, the increase of the food-processing sector's share in Malian exports, or the greater involvement of financial institutions in funding agro-businesses.

Goal and strategic objective indicators are macro-indicators, while output and input ones are micro-indicators.

2.1.2 : Risk Indicators :

These indicators are not generally used at the CAE. Risk indicators measure the influence of exogenous or endogenous factors that can directly affect the activities or objectives of the CAE (employee salaries and living cost, degree of commitment of clients and partners). These factors can be identified by risk analysis.

2.1.3 : Efficiency Indicators :

These indicators show how results at one level have contributed to results at the next level. They comprise :

- **profitability indicators** : the ratio resources required per unit of output (e.g.: number of hours of use of a huller for the production of a ton of high-grade white rice) ;
- **operational indicators** : the ratio of outputs required per unit of known impact (e.g. quantity of gambiaka rice produced per unit increase in export rate) ;
- **sustainable development indicators** : the sustainability of beneficial SEG/CAE impacts at the end of the project (e.g. use of potato conservation exercises after AMATEVI intervention or administrative and financial autonomy of the Information Unit after the project).

Indicators must by definition be measurable, so that they permit evaluation and analysis of a situation, and deductions about what action to take.

In the CAE, all actions are already planned in detail, with the indicators defined for the most part in the Annual Workplan. In the context of this financial year, the point would therefore be to validate them and collate them by hierarchy of objective and sector of activity. That is, where they exist, collate them by **1)** the contractual results of the CAE (including validation of R.C.11 indicators) and **2)** the intermediate results of the CAE. This implies working out the logical framework of the project and of the four main CAE result-areas : Information, Commercial Development, Policy Analysis, and Monitoring-Evaluation. These logical frameworks could be established on the model of the Table in Annex B.

This exercise of validation and collation of indicators already available could be performed according to the schema below. Indicators not defined at the beginning of the year could now be defined. Mastering this methodology will facilitate the selection of indicators for the whole team, particularly when the Year 3 Workplan is worked out.

2.2 : THE LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Here we attempt to present the logical framework, its main components and their relations, and its application to the project. Mastering the logical framework will, however, require additional training of CAE staff.

A very succinct definition of the logical framework : ‘a set of interrelated concepts that must be used concurrently and dynamically in order to allow the creation of a well designed project described in objective terms, whose results can subsequently be evaluated’.

It is a systematic procedure allowing overall grasp of a project and identification of significant external interventions. A project is generally perceived in the light of an experiment promoting a certain form of learning; the logical framework takes full account of this uncertainty by favouring modification.

2.2.1 : Form in which logical framework is presented :

Vertical components :

Overall objective : this is the project's *raison d'être* in terms of objectives or sectorial goals, to which the other projects contribute. Also called strategic objective or long-term goal.

Goal : the situation desired at the end of the project or its *raison d'être* in terms of expected and verifiable results. The goal is not a synthesis of inputs but the result of the relation between the outputs.

Outputs : the tangible results of the project (goods or services).

Relations between vertical components: the desired outputs are only produced if the inputs are sufficient and the goal will only be attained if the outputs are produced as planned.

Horizontal components :

Project parameters : narrative description of the strategic objective, the goal, the inputs and outputs.

Indicators : these are the objectively verifiable indices (OVI), often presented in figures, which represent in clear and precise fashion the goals to be attained in terms of quantity, quality and time.

Means of verification : the planned means for verifying the indicators. They normally include types of data and methods of collection.

Critical suppositions : These relate to environmental conditions that may have an important impact on the project. The project manager has no direct control over these conditions. They are environmental sources of uncertainty.

2.2.2 : The Logical Framework during the Project :

Definition Phase :

- Preliminary definition of the vertical components: strategic objective, goal, outputs, inputs, critical suppositions linked to various dimensions of the environment.
- Definition of the relevant indicators.
- Vertical-coherence analysis, that is, analysis of the necessary or sufficient character of each level relative to the level above (from top to bottom).
- Finalisation of the framework and relevance test.
- Identification of the means of verifying the relevant indicators.
- Feasibility studies: analysing capacity to produce the outputs with the inputs, verification of critical suppositions.

Planning Phase :

- Revision of the logical framework and coherence test
- Starting point for detailed planning
- Action plan for managing critical conditions.

Project Mastery Phase :

- Monitoring of critical conditions
- Monitoring of output production according to the timetable and using planned inputs
- Evaluation and possible reorientation according to the pre-established hierarchy of objectives.

End of Project Phase :

- Evaluation of the project using the logical framework
- Project memoire.

2.3 : HOW TO CREATE A SYSTEM OF INDICATORS

A reminder of certain prerequisites :

- An efficient system of indicators must be designed during the identification phase or at the latest during the drawing up of the Annual Workplan ;
- An indicator is of no service unless its value before the beginning of the project or before the drawing up of the annual work plan is known ;
- The indicator must be as simple as possible in order to facilitate measurement.

The indicator system or instrument panel must make it possible to get a picture of the overall situation of the CAE in order to **facilitate decision-making and trigger corrective action** by clearly locating the sources of and reasons for any problems detected.

A system should include indicators pertaining to the three major categories generally recognised (result, risk and efficiency). The indicator system must moreover follow a precise logical order relating to hierarchical levels (hierarchy of objectives from general to particular) in order to facilitate selection of relevant indicators and ascertain exactly where/when stock-taking operations should be undertaken.

2.3.1 : Implementation of the Method :

First one must nominate the executive responsible, form a team, draw up the system and validate it.

The next stage is to designate the person responsible for implementation. This person *must* have mastered the methodology of setting up a system of indicators and be able to communicate it to users. Where no such person exists, someone must be trained. This person must also be able to listen, perceive and manage interactions, analyse and exploit individual reactions, know how to remain neutral and must not be prejudiced.

Composition of the team: it is essential that the team comprise representatives of the different CAE specialities. At this stage, the full agreement of each member is indispensable. Everything must be done to ensure the participation of the members of the group, so that it is generally understood both that the CAE is a single coherent entity (system) and that the indicators must take account of the specificity of the sectors covered by the CAE.

The system must be prepared by sessions of group work. Successive meetings must be held with a precise agenda and precise objectives. The person in charge must at first train the team members in group work. He will have to assume a leadership role during the meetings.

During the validation of the system, one must check the relevance of the indicators (see below 'indicator characteristics') and ensure that they really do allow one to verify and explain a given situation. Ask yourself: does the indicator selected indicate what I want it to indicate ? If it does not, it must be modified. An indicator can only be relevant in a precise situation and should be revised or changed if it is no longer useful.

It is important, too, to ensure the involvement and approval of the heads of CAE by keeping them regularly informed.

2.3.2 : Indicator characteristics :

To be efficient, performance indicators must be :

- Relevant/directly related to the objectives of the CAE ;
- Easy to use, practical and concrete. Data determining indicators must be easy to collect ;
- Quantitative : otherwise they are not objective ;
- Comparable : to allow comparison with the indicators of similar projects ;
- Targeted : they must make it possible to locate a problem and facilitate corrective action.

Indicators are important instruments for monitoring and evaluation ; they make it possible to identify problematic or critical situations and allow the project-heads to make decisions reorienting the project.

2.2.3 : Monitoring and Control :

To ensure monitoring and control, activities must be planned and precise results identified ; these must be specified in terms of cost, timetable and quality. Classic monitoring and control methods are generally associated with verification of costs and timetable. The success of a project cannot be evaluated on these two criteria alone ; quality criteria must also be taken into account.

In addition, monitoring and control requires verification of certain critical conditions, the implementation of certain tasks, and respect of initial specifications in the production of outputs.

Monitoring reveals the progress of activities and of costs at various different stages of the project. This requires :

- specifying the real date of the beginning and end of each task ;
- specifying the real work of the internal resources in regular and overtime ;
- a measure of the real cost of the internal resources in regular and overtime ;
- a measure of the real value of the other costs (management, executives, daily wages, etc.) ;
- regular verification of the indicators.

Monitoring is comparison between the results of the activities and the initial forecasts (specifications, timetable, reference budget, etc). This implies :

- comparison between activities completed and those that should have been completed by the control date ;
- comparison between the real costs of the activities completed and the planned costs for the same activities ;
- comparison between the indicators and their target values (relative to the starting value) ;
- implementation of corrective measures and necessary adjustments.

Frequency of monitoring depends on the project timetable. A short project, such as the improvement tests for rice hulling or the potato conservation improvement project, must be monitored day by day, whereas a longer project must be monitored on a monthly or annual basis.

2.3.4 : Exploitation of Results :

During the execution phase of the project, the evaluation of gaps and their exploitation takes the form of a problem resolution procedure : Seek out the causes ► Select the main cause; this cause can be confirmed by a field investigation ► Seek solutions ► Select a solution ► Implement the solution (solution implementation must of course be planned).

At every stage of this system, group work is a necessity. It should take place under the supervision of the head of monitoring-evaluation. The efficiency of the process derives from the creativity, imagination and objectivity of the group.

Indicators are a vital instrument for monitoring and evaluating a project. Their selection must rigorous. The same applies to the collection of information allowing the quantification and interpretation of the indicators (indicator monitoring). Many instruments (questionnaires, monitoring forms, etc.) can be designed to ensure the monitoring

of the indicators. We have selected one that is combines simplicity with easy preparation of progress reports, facilitating future evaluation of the project. This is the indicator monitoring table, which allows decisions to be monitored and their impact and relevance to be evaluated (see Annex C).

III - CONCLUSIONS

In this consultation, my procedure has not been simply to propose a system of monitoring and evaluation based on the current Annual Workplan of the CAE. It has been to propose a methodology for designing an effective system of monitoring and evaluation based on indicators. I have tried to avoid offering a 'recipe' and to prioritize a pedagogical approach. The many concrete examples illustrating the methodology should make it easy to assimilate. The group work recommended will further increase the efficiency of the Centre, by prioritizing communication and motivation. In this way, the technique can be appropriated by everyone, which makes it more sustainable. As to the current structuring of the data-bases, we would recommend that it stays as it is ; it currently combines two merits, being both sufficiently broad and easy to manage. Its development hereafter will be decided by the use made of it by future multidisciplinary teams. However, some suggestions for the improvement of data-collection instruments have nonetheless been made.

IV - GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

In the first place, it is important to emphasise that any step taken in the field of monitoring and evaluation should involve group work in which close collaboration between the initiator and the users is imperative. The essential point is to obtain the full agreement of all the parties concerned internally (the entire team) and externally (clients and partners, USAID). This would help to establish a veritable communications strategy, which would not only contribute to the loyalty of clients, partners and financial backer, but, more important, increase the cohesion of the structure itself.

♦ Concerning the monitoring and evaluation strategy :

- The monitoring and evaluation strategy should be focused narrowly on the three fields of intervention prioritised by the Centre : branch development, agro-business capacity reinforcement and sectorial policy reform.
- Use of the logical framework would help to systematise monitoring and evaluation, since it would allow a uniform grasp of the project and all its components (objectives). This implies a precise definition of the indicators at each hierarchical level of the logical framework, thus reducing uncertainties and facilitating decision-making.
- Monitoring and evaluation by performance-indicator methods, if properly assimilated and practised, should make it possible to establish objective criteria, take account of risks in order to relativise results, and make any adjustments needed to attain objectives. This method implies planning both the activities needed to attain CAE objectives and their monitoring and evaluation.

Concerning Monitoring :

♦ Relative to the Data-Collection Instruments :

The new headings in the partner-identification forms, agro-business-identification forms, contact forms and processing-unit-monitoring forms should be integrated so that these forms to make them more effective. A further heading should be added concerning quality assessment.

- The form for the identification and registering of new clients should contain additional headings on the internal organisation of the enterprise (level of organisation), the level and qualifications of the staff, the types of technology and techniques used, productions and sales levels, sales destinations (for exports), product characteristics, sales prices, turnover, etc. There should also be a heading on the expected development of the enterprise in order to anticipate future support by the CAE. The heading 'others' should always carry the instruction 'specify'.
- The partner identification form could be enriched with a section on the partner's main specialisation, number of specialists per domain or intervention sector, their status (permanent or recruited in response to tenders), affiliation to an association or an order, and above all the way in which knowledge in the relevant fields is retained or developed.
- The commercial-contact form could be improved by adding a section on problems encountered and on the 'person identified as responsible' in relation to any action.
- The monitoring-evaluation form on processing units should contain an additional section requiring a brief description of the processing technique, and others on the allocation of tasks and responsibilities (qualification of staff and identifiable training needs), on the site of the infrastructure (close to or distant from the site of production of crop/livestock and availability/lack of means of transport, since these things are decisive for cost price), quality of finished product, information on any development plans (future perspectives), etc.
- Given the CAE's branch-oriented approach, there should be forms for monitoring production and marketing units as there are for monitoring processing units ;

- Responsibility for filling in and updating these forms should fall on all members of the CAE team, including the administration, which could also be required to make contact with clients and prospect for new partners. Once these forms are filled in they should be centralised with the head of monitoring and evaluation so that he can use them to supplement the data-bases ;
- Two new forms should be added to the current ones, the Indicator Table and the Indicator Monitoring Table ; the former serves as a sort of instrument panel for the head of monitoring and evaluation, and the other makes it possible to steer the project, using the instrument panel.
- Survey forms intended to define basic data and suitable performance- and result-indicators at the start of the year are used at the end of the year to verify the assessment made during monitoring and should therefore include questions making it possible to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the project.

♦ **Concerning data-Bases :**

- It is essential that their structure be improved by using the same detailed headings as are found in the forms by which they are built up. There should also be a quality- measurement heading.
- The data-bases should be interconnected in logical fashion so as to produce at a glance all the available information on a client or partner. It would, for example, be helpful to note the objectives or content of any contacts, the timetable of the actions to be performed or that of the relevant executive, the training sessions that person x of category y belong to structure z received in order to resolve a particular problem, after a visit from and discussions with CAE executive a on date b, and the impact of collaboration with the CAE.
- A data-base of training officers and consultants should be set up ; this should be linked to the training data-base. Similarly there should be a data-base of studies and consultations, succinctly describing the terms of reference, results and effects ; this would make available information on everything going on at the CAE.

♦ **Concerning monitoring of studies and consultations :**

The terms of reference of all contracts between the CAE and clients and partners should of course be systematically submitted to the head of monitoring and evaluation, so as to permit him not only to feed this information into the data-bases, but also to ensure that activities are monitored, with a view to his verifying whether the indicators selected at the start of the year are still relevant, and, if need be, calling in relevant specialists.

♦ **Concerning quarterly and annual activity reports :**

The drafting of these reports should be the job of the head of monitoring and evaluation, on condition that he can play his full role in progress-monitoring and the coordination, recording, analysis, and interpretation of all incoming data. This could be achieved if i.) all the instruments are provided and properly used, ii.) if the structure of the CAE is revised so as to enhance the cohesion and collaboration of the entire team, iii.) if responsibilities and competences within it are clarified, and iv.) if an efficient system of indicators is established.

Evaluation :

♦ **Concerning planning :**

As noted for monitoring, evaluation activity must be planned with the agreement of all interested parties simultaneous with the drafting of the CAE strategic work plan.

♦ **Concerning monitoring :**

Indicators that have served monitoring purposes should normally supply quantitative and qualitative data useful in evaluation ; monitoring should therefore reinforce evaluation.

♦ **Concerning basic surveys :**

Surveys should be undertaken by the head of the Unit or of the relevant branch in collaboration with the head of monitoring-evaluation, so that any technical problems can easily be grasped. It should be remembered that surveys should essentially focus on project effectiveness and efficiency.

The System Itself :

An effective indicator system, based on the logical framework, should be adopted, so that someone can quickly be nominated to design the system of indicator-based monitoring and evaluation, and quickly train the team responsible for drawing up this system.

The person responsible for monitoring and evaluating the CAE's activities should be made responsible for monitoring and evaluation. He should consequently be responsible for drafting the Centre's periodic reports ; in the proposed restructuring, this would be the Deputy Director.

Nevertheless, every member of the team should, at their own level, regard themselves as responsible for monitoring and evaluating their own activities. Similarly, each team leader should be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the work of his team.

Once these responsibilities have been located, and integrated into the terms of reference of CAE staff, the system would essentially consist of implementing the method of indicator selection, monitoring these indicators, analysing and interpreting gaps with a view to decision-making, and measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of the Centre. System improvement would result primarily from the planning of CAE activities, the planning of monitoring and the planning of evaluation. Also required is the proper maintenance of the various data-collecting instruments and the improvement of the data-bases by their enrichment and interconnection.

The Organisation of the CAE Itself :

Given the unanimous view that the current structure of the CAE gives rise to dysfunction and bottlenecks, it is vital that the proposed new structure be adopted; this would make it possible to implement the strategic choice to

prioritise team work. Creating sub-sectorial, multidisciplinary teams would increase the flexibility, dynamism and effectiveness of the Centre (see proposal, Annex A).

Functional and motivating information should be prioritised in order to establish a climate of trust and motivation for the personnel.

Participatory procedures should be the norm when drawing up the terms of reference in the new organisation chart. These terms of reference should invariably comprise a section on monitoring and evaluation, since everyone in the CAE has a role to play in that area.

Individual activities should be planned on a quarterly basis in order to ensure better monitoring and control; precise results should be identified, which can be stated in terms of costs, timescale and quality.

Weekly meetings of the leaders of the teams thus constituted, monthly meetings of regional office heads and all teams, and quarterly meetings bringing together the whole CAE would improve monitoring performance ; these meetings should have systematic agendas and minutes.

Given the new approach to work, it is important to redefine the collaboration relations between the technical teams and the Administration, via quarterly planning of all activities; emergencies should be the exception and not the rule.

It would be sensible to plan an evaluation of implementation of the system after a certain time, so that it can be refined. Procedural organisation and analysis of posts will also be required in the context of the new structuring of the CAE.

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ANNEX A

Proposal for the restructuring of the CAE

All organisations have to evolve and update in order to adapt to a changing internal and external environment, and self-reconfiguration can be a means of influencing this environment. In this context, and given the failure of communication within the CAE on the one hand, and the predictable increase in its activities on the other, a restructuring is proposed. This new organisation of the CAE would facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of its activities. Since this would take place at every level of responsibility, it should also deal with :

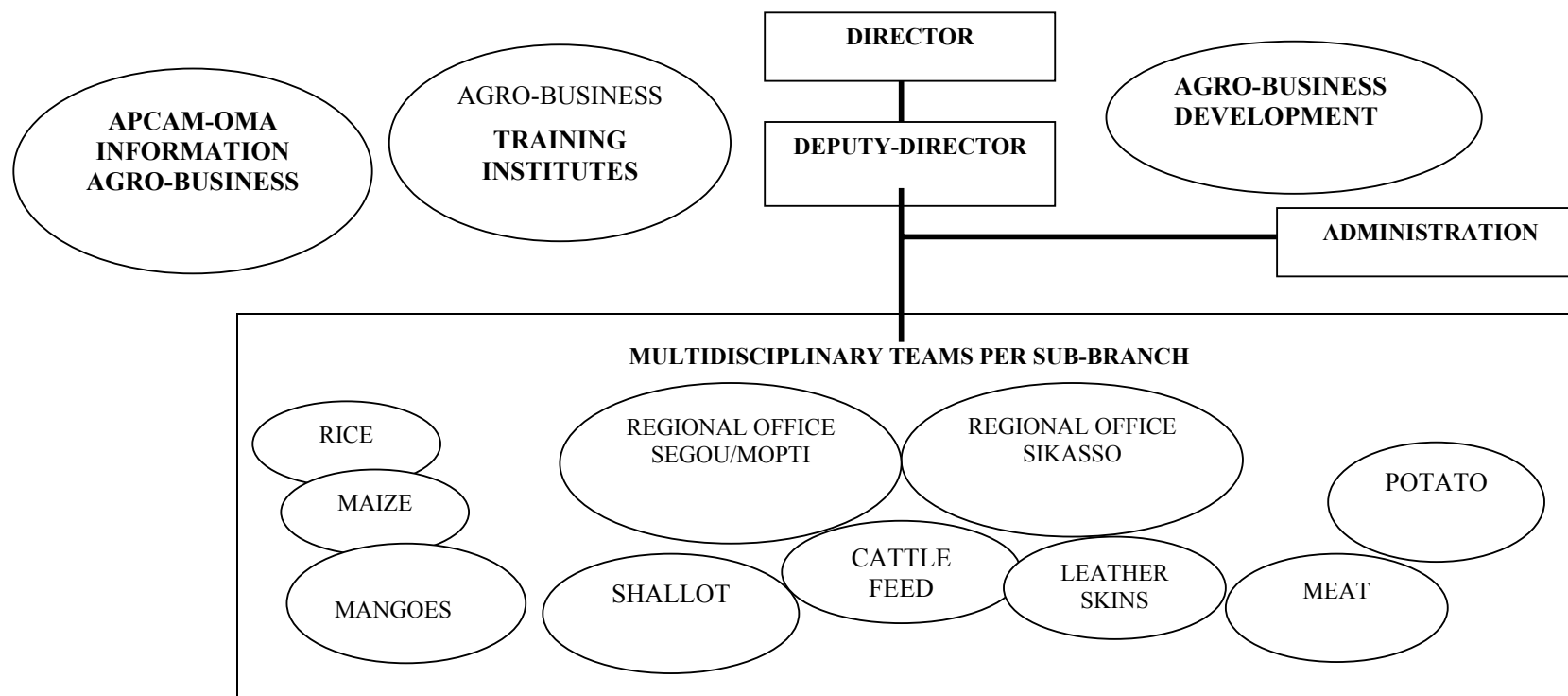
1. problems relating to the proliferation of functions ;
2. problems of communication and information ;
3. lack of coordination and cohesion in the CAE team ;
4. inadequately defined procedures ;
5. failure to clarify the responsibilities and competences of each team-member.

Under the authority of a Deputy or Assistant Director, operational teams each with its own leader would be set up for each specific 'sub-branch'. The use of these teams, composed of all the CAE specialists, would increase the flexibility, speed of action and communication and innovative tendencies of the CAE. This structure would further allow decisions to be delegated, and therefore offer designated team leaders greater responsibility. All of this is perfectly conceivable given the relative similarity of the tasks in the various units and the need for overall collaboration.

The structure of the terms of reference should (normally) comprise the following headings, which, though not exhaustive, should avoid misunderstandings :

- ◆ Name of post
- ◆ Department to which it is attached
- ◆ Strategic goal of post
- ◆ Rank of post-holder
- ◆ Colleagues immediately subordinate
- ◆ Deputyship
- ◆ General objectives of the post
- ◆ Individual tasks
- ◆ Limit of responsibilities
- ◆ Powers and competences of the post-holder
- ◆ Information rights and duties
- ◆ Collaboration with other posts
- ◆ Participation on committees, commissions, etc.
- ◆ Requirements made of post-holder (qualifications)
- ◆ Working conditions
- ◆ Means at holder's disposal
- ◆ Place of work

Proposed New Structure of the CAE



Description of the tasks of the various posts as regards monitoring and evaluation :

No attempt is made here to give an exhaustive description of the posts. We are concerned to give an outline description in order to clarify the monitoring and evaluation responsibilities of each post. An in-depth definition would constitute the first task to be accomplished if the new structure were adopted. This system should be participatory: first, holders of each post at every level would define their own terms of reference; they would then transmit their proposals to their hierarchical superior for comment, the latter would transmit them to the Deputy Director, who would add his own observations, and the Director would validate them as final arbiter.

Director :

In the field of monitoring and evaluation, the Director would take on the following tasks :

- ◆ implement the CAE's strategy ;
- ◆ ensure cohesion and coordination within the CAE ;
- ◆ validate the responsibilities and powers contained in the terms of reference at every hierarchical level of the CAE ;
- ◆ approve and validate as final arbiter the strategy and analysis reports and dossiers received from the Deputy Director.

Deputy-Director :

Under the authority of the Director, the Deputy-Director would have the following responsibilities in the field of monitoring and evaluation :

- ◆ appointing the teams as their specific activities required ;
- ◆ drafting the Annual Workplan after identifying needs with the CAE's clients ;
- ◆ appointing and leading the multidisciplinary activities ;
- ◆ defining the CAE performance indicators in close collaboration with the team members ;
- ◆ ensuring that a quarterly workplan is drawn up for each team ;
- ◆ drawing up the workplan budget for funding purposes ;
- ◆ ensuring coordination between teams ;
- ◆ managing the monitoring of CAE activities on a daily basis ;
- ◆ advising and orienting team chiefs as required ;
- ◆ supervising and ensuring the updating of the CAE data-bases ;
- ◆ holding short weekly briefings with the heads of the teams, monthly meetings with all the teams, and quarterly meetings with the entire CAE team. Systematic minutes would be taken at these meetings and distributed to all concerned ;
- ◆ ensuring that the regional office heads meet the teams on a monthly basis ;
- ◆ ensuring that monitoring-evaluation data on activities (all reports from service-providers, clients, consultants, training, missions, plus analysis documents, etc.) are available and accessible to members of relevant teams ;
- ◆ regularly supplying data on activity-monitoring and evaluation to management ;
- ◆ drafting the CAE activity reports for submission to the Director.

Team Leaders :

Under the direct authority of the Deputy-Director, the Team Leaders would :

- ♦ ensure the creation of a quarterly workplan for each member of the team ;
- ♦ draw up the budget of the various workplans for funding purposes ;
- ♦ provide team-leadership and ensure coordination between team members ;
- ♦ daily supervise and monitor the activities of each team member ;
- ♦ daily supervise the monitoring of partner-, subcontractor- and client-activities ;
- ♦ ensure the systematic completion of the various forms and especially the updating of the indicator-monitoring table ;
- ♦ supply information to the Deputy Director on the progress of team activities ;
- ♦ produce reports on the team's activity to be submitted to the Deputy Director.

Team Members :

Under the supervision of the Team Leader, each Team Member would :

- ♦ draw up a quarterly activity plan ;
- ♦ draw up budgets for these activities to submit to the Team Leader ;
- ♦ ensure the monitoring of partner, subcontractor and client-activities in his own spécialisation ;
- ♦ ensure the systematic completion of forms and indicator-monitoring table ;
- ♦ give a regular account of the progress of activities to the Team Leader ;
- ♦ produce quarterly activity reports to submit to the Team Leader.

Partnership Fund :

Under the supervision of the Deputy Director, the head of the Partnership Fund would take part in the multidisciplinary team and would have the following tasks :

- ♦ drawing up a quarterly activity plan ;
- ♦ coordinating the financial fulfilment of contracts with consultants, service-providers and sub-contractors ;
- ♦ ensuring the monitoring of disbursements, after evaluation (by the technical team) of the services of consultants and sub-contractors ;
- ♦ keeping the Deputy Director regularly informed of the financial fulfilment of contracts funded by the Partnership Fund ;
- ♦ producing financial reports concerning contracts.

Regional Office Heads :

Would form an integral part of the multidisciplinary teams and are *de officio* members of the teams working in their regions. Under this aspect particularly, they should systematically take part in all the monitoring and evaluation activities in their regions.

Training and Communication Unit :

This unit could in the long term develop its own autonomy and convert itself into a Training Institute for Agro-entrepreneurs. Since it charges for all the services that it provides, it could become completely self-financing if its charges were aligned with those of the market. It should prepare itself gradually to begin this process. Contacts and discussions with this in mind have already begun with the Training Officers Network.

The Training Component of the Commercial Development Group :

This component too could be transferred to the network of partners who have received sufficient support to be able to take on the expenses of training and consultancy destined to reinforce the capacities of agro-enterprises and their associations.

The Information Unit :

A part of the activities of the Information Unit could be transferred to the Agricultural Markets Monitoring Service (Observatoire des Marchés Agricoles), thus disburdening the unit of certain tasks relating to the public sector, such as information on tariffs and regulations, market norms, etc., given the sustainability of the Office of Agricultural Markets (OMA) and the contacts already made with that entity. We should, moreover, note that certain services provided by the Information Unit could already be made payable and thus, in the longer term, generate resources allowing the unit to establish itself as a separate and autonomous institution.

Logical Framework :

<div>CAE</div> <div> Author : _____ Date : _____ </div>				
Project Parameters	Indicators (OVIs)	Means of Verificat-ion	Risks and Critical Conditions	Remarks
Strategic : Objectives for which the project is the means	In theory, one indicator per strategic objective	Method for measuring each indicator	When the goal is reached, the strategic objective too should be, if these conditions apply	
Goal : Results expected by project's end	At least one indicator per result or operational objective	Method for measuring each of the indicators	If the outputs are attained, the goal should be attained, if these conditions apply	
Outputs : List of outputs and secondary outputs	Specification of each output (physical character, quality norms, key deadlines)	Ditto	If the inputs are available, the outputs should be attained if these conditions apply.	
Inputs : Main resources required: human, material, financial	Estimate of each resource for the project	Ditto	Suppositions relative to the availability of inputs	

Annex C

Indicator-Monitoring Table

CAE			Date : _____			
Tasks	Indicators		Findings	Causes/ Effects	Corrective actions taken	Results
	Name	TypeResult Risk Effectiveness				
Training of agro-entrepreneurs in module 'Master-ing costs'	Application of 'Mastering costs' method	Result indicator	9/15 agro-entrepreneurs used the method in managing their enterprises	3 agro-entrepreneurs didn't need this module; 3 others had no action plan	Work out better criteria for taking part in this module (emphasis on pre-requisite levels). Include design of action plan in module	Better selection of participants. Methods are applied not only to the action plan worked out during the module but also to other activities

Indicator Table

CAE				
Indicator Table				
Indicators	Person Responsible	Definition (values measured)	Period-icity	Users
Results :				
Risks :				
Effectiveness :				

- The indicators must be precise and comprehensible and divided into three major categories ;
- The name of the persons responsible for monitoring the indicators ;
- The definition of the indicators, i.e. the values to be measured. The unit of measurement must be specified ;
- The periodicity is the frequency with which indicators are produced, which varies with indicator type and short, medium, or long -term activities ;
- The users: the indicator users must be specified. Here too name the executive who must have access to this indicator.

Annex E

CONSULTATION ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE MONITORING EVALUATION
SYSTEM OF THE CENTRE AGRO-ENTREPRISE (CAE)

Technical Tender

Alain Andriamananony, Consultant

15 May 2000

1. Context :

In the various annual workplans of the Centre Agro-Entreprise (CAE), each activity is linked to one or more indicators. This may be a result, risk or effectiveness or sometimes an impact indicator. These indicators constitute target values which must be monitored during the performance of activities. The CAE, in the context of its new strategy, wishes to make of monitoring-evaluation, which constitutes one of the four pillars of this strategy, a permanent instrument for measuring results achieved; the indicators serve to verify progress made in terms of results obtained or of the attainment of the objectives fixed at the start of the financial year. The monitoring-evaluation function also make possible a stricter exercise of responsibilities.

The present consultation is situated in this context; its goal is to improve and validate the monitoring and evaluation system established in the CAE.

The task is therefore to design appropriate instruments and a system for their use that not only makes it possible to measure the results obtained by the Centre but also to detect impacts that must logically contribute to the attainment of the intermediary results of the SEG of USAID.

2. Expected Outputs :

- 2.1. **A operational framework for monitoring and evaluation**, suitable to the CAE's strategic approach (description of systems, information circulation and network, identification of decision-makers, tasks and responsibilities, etc.) ;
- 2.2. **A methodology for the constitution and use of an efficient system of indicators** (control panel) so as to facilitate the evaluation and analysis of activities (drafting of reports) and deduce any necessary corrective measures. This requires :
- 2.3. **A definition of the various indicators** used by the CAE (result, risk, effectiveness, macro and micro indicators, etc.) ;

- 2.4. **Enrichment and restructuring of the data collection documents** (forms, record cards, tables, etc) corresponding to the needs of the CAE's management in the attainment of its objectives.

3. Methodology and Stages of the Consultation :

3.1. Methodology of the Consultation :

The consultant will work in close collaboration with the Information Unit, notably with the head of Monitoring-Evaluation. The consultation will be based on the study and analysis of the system currently in place and of documentation. Work sessions will be organised with the Coordinators and members of the different Units, including the Administration; these can take the form of group interviews. Surveys and polls will be conducted with some of the CAE's partners and clients. The criteria by which these will be selected will be defined in collaboration with the responsible officials of the Information Unit.

3.2. The Stages of the Consultation :

- 3.21 Diagnosis and analysis of the monitoring-evaluation system in the Information Unit relative to the objective of the consultation :
- inventory and analysis of the monitoring and evaluation documents used : contact, partner identification, agro-business identification, service demand, and information technology forms, etc.;
 - inventory and analysis of the information available (available data-bases) at the monitoring and evaluation office (ME) of the Information Unit ;
 - Diagnosis of the functioning of the ME office (constitution of data-bases, use and management of data-bases, circulation of information relative to data-bases, etc.).
- 3.22 Study and analysis of the responsibilities and competences of the various units in the context of the monitoring and evaluation of their activities :
- Trade development ;
 - Information ;
 - Policy ;
 - Training and Communication ;
 - Partnership Fund ;
 - Administration.
- 3.23 Analysis of the method of fixing objectives and of choosing and fixing indicators ;
- 3.24 Inventorying the internal monitoring and evaluation methods and documents of each operational unit ;
- 3.25 Analysing methods of drafting activity reports ;
- 3.26 Evaluating the integration and interrelations of the units as sub-systems ;
- 3.27 Contacts (interviews) with certain of CAE's clients and partners (criteria of selection to be decided in collaboration with the monitoring and evaluation officials) ;
- 3.28 Drafting of a provisional consultation report, including proposals for procedures, for the enrichment of various forms and records - and perhaps for new forms, structuring of data-bases, responsibilities of the Coordinators in respect of monitoring-evaluation, and the role, tasks and responsibilities of the Information Unit (ME).
- 3.29 Oral pre-report, discussion on the contents of the report and testing the new proposals with the monitoring-evaluation officials ;

Submission of definitive report.

4. Duration of the Consultation :

The present consultation is planned to take 4 weeks, from 17 May to 14 June 2000. The proposed chronogram is as follows :

CHRONOGRAM OF THECONSULTATION (*)

ACTIVITIES	Week I	Week II	Week III	Week IV	Methods
. Study-diagnosis of the monitoring-evaluation office : analysis of documents, data-bases, available data, and functioning.					Interview and notes
. Study-analysis of competences and responsibility of Coordinators in monitoring-evaluation.					Group interview
. Analysis of methods of definition of indicators.					— " —
. Inventory-analysis of internal monitoring-evluation methods and documents of Coordinators.					— " —
. Analysis of internal methods of drafting activity reports.					— " —
. Evaluation, integration and interrelations of Coordinators.					Interviews, question naire
. Interview with clients and partners.					
. Drafting of provisional report					Meeting-workshop
. Oral pre-report - Test					
. Submission of definitive report					

(*) Modifications may be made and details added according to the availability of the members of the différents Units, particularly for group interviews.

DETAILED CHRONOGRAM OF THE CONSULTATION

ACTIVITIES	DAY DATE	Week I	Week II	Week III	Week IV	Week V	Remarks.
		3 4 5 17 18 19	1 2 3 (4) 5 22 23 24 (25) 26	1 2 3 4 5 29 30 31 1 2	1 2 3 4 5 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 12 13 14	
<p>. <u>Study-diagnosis of monitoring-evaluation office</u> :</p> <p>Through monitoring the following activities :</p> <p>. Branch development : analysis of data-bank (built from forms and records), strategic work plans, quarterly and annual activity reports, monthly completion reports.</p> <p>. Studies, missions and recommendations (TOR and reports)</p> <p>. Client management (reception, visits), individual support actions, participation in trade fairs (TOR and reports), participation in training sessions (register)</p> <p>2. <u>Work session with the Information Unit team</u> : rôle and competences of the UI.</p> <p>3. <u>Briefing the Project Head on the Chronogram</u></p> <p>4. <u>Meetings for study-analysis of competences and responsibilities of Coordinators in monitoring-evaluation</u> : Analysis of indicator definition methods, inventory-analysis of internal monitoring and evaluation documents and methods, analysis of internal methods of activity report drafting, evaluation, integration and interrelations of Coordinators :</p> <p>- Commercial Development Unit (UDC)</p> <p>- Training and Communication Unit (UFC)</p>							

DETAILED CHRONOGRAM OF THE CONSULTATION

ACTIVITIES	DAY DATE	Week I	Week II	Week III	Week IV	Week V	
		3 4 5 17 18 19	1 2 3 (4) 5 22 23 24 (25)26	1 2 3 4 5 29 30 31 1 2	1 2 3 4 5 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 12 13 14	
<u>Meetings for study-analysis of competences and responsibilities of Coordinators in monitoring-evaluation :</u>							
- Policy Unit (UAP)			■				
- Partnership Fund			■				
- Administration			■				
- Information Unit (UI)				■			
5. <u>Regional fiel trip</u> to interview CAE clients and partners :							
- Niono (Ségou)				■			
- Sikasso				■			
- Koutiala (possibly)				■			
6. <u>Drafting report</u>							
7. <u>Submitting provisional report</u> (oral restitution)							
8. <u>Integration of remarks and observations</u>							
9. <u>Submission of definitive report and debriefing</u>							

Annex F

LIST OF DOCUMENTS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE CONSULTANT

- ♦ Centre Agro-Entreprise organisation chart ;
- ♦ Initial Report of SEG Mali and Preliminary Annual Execution Plan (Oct 1998- Sept 1999) ;
- ♦ Annual Report, Year 1 of SEG-Mali (1998-1999) ;
- ♦ CAE Year 2 Strategic Work Plan ;
- ♦ Quarterly Report, Jan-March 2000 ;
- ♦ Agro-Enterprise Identification Form ;
- ♦ Contact Form ;
- ♦ IT-Needs Identification Form ;
- ♦ Processing-Units Monitoring Form ;
- ♦ Information Unit Service-Request Form ;
- ♦ Basic Survey Forms: Training, Publications, Participation in Trade Fairs ;
- ♦ Descriptions of the posts of the executives and personnel of the CAE, including : Project Administrator, UDC, Enterprise Management, UAP, UI, Heads of Sikasso and Mopti-Ségou CAE Regional Offices, Partnership Fund ;
- ♦ Terms of Reference of the Pilot Project on strengthening the cycle of collection, packaging, and export of mangoes from the Sikasso region to the Côte d'Ivoire and Europe and the Protocol of Agreement with the sub-contractor Crédit Initiative SA ;
- ♦ Terms of Reference of the Test on the Improvement of the Quality of Rice produced by the system of small hullers in the Office du Niger zone and the Protocol of Agreement with the Groupement Nyeta-Conseil/Afrique Verte ;
- ♦ Post-training monitoring report on the Peasant Organisations of Niono ;
- ♦ Terms of Reference on the Test of Improved Potato Conservation at Sikasso and the Protocol of Agreement with AMATEVI ;
- ♦ Terms of Reference of the Maize Degerming Test at Koutiala.

Annex G

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE GROUP INTERVIEWS

Main theme 1 : Responsibilities and competences in the context of monitoring-evaluation.

Responsibilities and competences of the different Units, from design to implementation and evaluation of the system.

- ♦ Critical incident : try to give a concrete example at each stage.

Sub-theme 1 : Contribution to setting up the system (30 mn) :

- Give your definition of ‘monitoring-evaluation’?
- What was your contribution to the design of the monitoring-evaluation system ?
- What documents or methods did you use for that ? (Describe the channels)
- At this level, in what terms are your tasks and responsibilities reflected in your job description ?
- Do you have proposals to help make your participation systematic ?

Sub-theme 2 : Involvement in the implementation of the system (45 mn) :

- How do you participate in implementation and what is your role in the functioning and implementation of this system ?
- What documents or methods do you use ? (Describe the channels too)
- What obstacles or impediments have you found to the efficient use of the system ? (techniques, time, clarity of tasks, etc.)
- How is your role at this stage described in your Terms of Reference ?
- What is your role in the monitoring and evaluation of your activities ?
- What do you propose in terms of systematic monitoring of your Unit, so that your results and their interpretation (evaluation, impact) can be properly recorded and brought to the attention of all members of the project and of the financial backer ?

Sub-theme 3 : Participation in the evaluation of the system (15 mn) :

- How have you contributed to the evaluation of the system of monitoring-evaluation and what suggestions have you made for its improvement ?
- What would help your suggestions to be followed up ?
- What are your proposals for making the system more effective (competences and role of the Information Unit) ?

Main Theme 2 : Workplan (10 mn) :

- How and with whom is your individual workplan worked out (weekly, quarterly, annual) ?
- How is this individual workplan approved ? How is it brought to the attention of other members of the CAE team ?
- How is it evaluated ?

Main Theme 3 : Interactions within the Unit and integration with the other units in the area of information.

Sub-theme 1 : Interactions within the Unit (15 mn) :

- Within your Unit, how you do select your objectives, performance indicators, and internal monitoring and evaluation instruments (methods and instruments of fixing an objective, determining indicators, monitoring, and formulating comments on results) ;
- As regards information, describe the working relations (tasks, responsibilities, collaboration) that you have to maintain with your colleagues within your Unit, both on a theoretical level (according to your Terms of Reference) and concretely (in fact) ;
- Suggestions for better circulation of information within the Unit.

Sub-theme 2 : Interaction with the other Units (15 mn) :

- Describe the relations in the matter of information that you have to maintain with colleagues from other Units, theoretically and in fact ;
- According to you, what interactions should the other Units have with the monitoring-evaluation specialist, from design to evaluation stages ;
- Suggestions for better circulation between Units.

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE MAIZE DEGERMING TEST AT KOUTIALA (Karangana and Namposéla)
Food Technology Laboratory**

CAE SUPPORT / CONSULTANCY

How did you learn of the existence of a monitoring-evaluation office at the CAE ?

1. Systems for identifying aid areas :

- How were you involved in the fixing of the indicators for monitoring and evaluation by the CAE ?
- Name the indicators for monitoring and for evaluation ?
- What instruments (methods) were used to define these indicators ?
- How do you inform the CAE of a support need outside the regular monitoring cycle? How long does it normally take them to react ?

2. Systems for monitoring and evaluation support :

- How is monitoring and evaluation planned ? (periodicity and your involvement in planning) ;
- List the documents used during monitoring and evaluation (if any) ;
- Describe the preparation and process of a monitoring mission (concrete example, role of the various parties involved, content of the discussions) ;
- How do you apply the recommendations of the monitoring mission (give a concrete example) ? How do you report back to CAE the implementation of its recommendations ?
- How do you ensure monitoring and evaluation at your level (describe systems, methods, instruments) ? In this particular instance, how (methods and instruments) do you expect to monitor and evaluate the training of machinists and the marketing of new products; how do you expect to gather data on the opinions and behaviour of the distributors and consumers relative to your new products ?
- How are your regular activity-reports structured ? Describe content. Who checks them? In what respects are the different aspects of the test and thus of the expected results reflected in these reports ?
- In what respects do the reports make CAE feedback possible ?
- Who is your interlocutor in the CAE? (Describe working relations) ?
- What do you expect from the CAE in terms of support and assistance ?
- How do you expect to contribute to the final evaluation of the test ?

3. Suggestions for the improvement of the monitoring-evaluation system agreed with the CAE :

- Format of regular reports ;
- Circulation of information CAE-Consultancy Bureau ;
- CAE's coverage of your needs ;
- CAE feedback ;
- Frequency of visits, etc.

Questions ?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CRÉDIT INITIATIVE, SIKASSO

Service provider

Capacity-reinforcement: collection, packaging and export of mangoes

- What are the systems and instruments currently established for monitoring and evaluating your services ?
- How were you involved in their design ?
- What is your role in the monitoring of the effects and impact of the project (relative to the general and specific objectives), and how is this role perceived by the CAE ?
- What criteria determine the planning of the monitoring and evaluation of your services ?
- What are the instruments and methods that you use to monitor and evaluate your activities in the context of your pilot project ?
- What are the indicators that you have defined to measure your success in attaining your objectives ? (Organisation and coordination in the branch, convincing the other businesses, preparation for funding requests) ;
- How are your regular reports to the CAE drafted/ structured ?
- Who sanctions the reports ?
- Who is your interlocutor at CAE (describe working relations) ?
- How is the project-information to be communicated to other businesses monitored? What means are used (at your and at the CAE end) ?
- How is the preparation of pool-members for funding requests monitored (at your and at the CAE end) ?

Have you any suggestions for improving the monitoring and evaluation system in place for this pilot project ?

Questions.

Questionnaire for the 'Sikasso Pool' Group

Main Theme I : CAE AID

How did you learn of the existence of a monitoring-evaluation office at the CAE ?

Sub-theme 1 : Systems for identifying aid areas (30 mn)

- How were you involved in the selection of indicators for CAE monitoring and evaluation ?
- Name the indicators i.) monitoring and ii.) evaluation) ?
- What instruments or method were used to determine these indicators ?
- How do you inform the CAE of a support need outside the regular monitoring cycle ? How long does it normally take them to react ?

Sub-theme 2 : Support monitoring and evaluation systems (40 mn)

- How are monitoring and evaluation planned (how was the periodicity decided ? Describe your involvement ?)
- List the documents (if any) used during monitoring and during evaluation ;
- Describe the preparation and process of a monitoring mission: role of the different parties. Give a concrete example ;
- Describe the preparation and process of an evaluation mission (give a concrete example, describe the role of the various parties involved) ;
- How do you implement the recommendations of the monitoring missions (give a concrete example) ? How do you inform the CAE of implementation of its recommendations ?

Main Theme II : MONITORING THE POOL'S COMMITMENTS (15 mn)

- How and by whom are the weekly activity reports drafted ? (Describe the structure of the reports)
- How and by whom are the contents of these reports validated ?
- Say how the these reports deal with all the information to be communicated to the CAE ?
- How do you learn of the CAE's reactions and comments on the reports ? Who at CAE gives you feedback, how, is it systematic or intermittent, what channels are used, what is the timescale ?
- What do you expect of the CAE in terms of monitoring and evaluation ?

What suggestions do you have for the improvement of the current systems of monitoring and evaluation ?

Questions ?

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR AMATEVI
(Sikasso)
Sub-contractor**

Support for improved potato conservation - Sikasso

- What are the systems and instruments currently used for monitoring and evaluating the services you provide ?
- How were you involved in their design ?
- How were the various indicators selected ?
- How do you go about planning the monitoring and evaluation of different activities (test, awareness-raising, training, marketing, etc) ?
- What are the methods and instruments that you use to monitor and evaluate these activities (Test: monitoring phytotechny, monitoring phytosanitary selection and protection, conservation and improvement of cases, marketing, etc) ?
- How are the monthly reports to the CAE worked out and structured ?
- What indicators measure the achievement of your various objectives: conservation effectiveness, producer organisation levels, potato marketing, etc. ?
- How do you contribute to the final evaluation ? (Instruments and methods).

Have you any suggestions for the improvement of the current system of monitoring and evaluation ?

Questions.

MINUTES OF INTERVIEWS WITH UNITS, PARTNERS AND CLIENTS OF THE CAE

1. Commercial Development Unit

Definition of the notion of monitoring-evaluation :

- monitoring and evaluation of activities and thus of individual professional performance ;
- calibration of the extent to which objectives have been attained, explication of any gaps, rectification of strategies and activities.

Sub-theme 1 : Contribution to the setting up of the system :

- The contribution is the responsibility of the Unit Head essentially as regards one-off activities. The system is not clearly defined in advance; reports are merely descriptive. In the planning of Year 2 Workplan, landmarks to be used for a mini-evaluation were defined, and indicators were fixed in collaboration with the ME office; there were several meetings and discussions but nothing was settled with the exception of the identification forms, after dialogue with the consultant responsible for setting up the data bases. The Unit members supplied information for building this data-base.
- Documents and methods : the information forms are used only for collecting information (agro-business identification forms, contact forms), whereas ME tasks are assimilated to personal performance evaluation work.
- ME work does not appear in the TOR of the UDC members. There has to be repeated emphasis on the ME system at the start of the project if it is to function. Consider setting up a computerised programme that would let everyone know what everyone else was doing.

Sub-theme 2 : Involvement in implementation :

- Participation through activity reports and filling in various forms. There is never any feedback from the ME office. Monitoring currently limited to the production of quarterly reports. ME should have been given due attention from the start of the project.
- Nevertheless, there have been many actions and proposals, but none of them have been implemented. There is no retro-activity. Information is simply not processed.
- The ME system should be situated in a hierarchical context outside that of the CAE, for example, at USAID.
- The main obstacle to implementation is that people don't necessarily recognise themselves in the factual indicators that were selected with the help of an external consultant. Lots of individual interviews were organised for the definition of the indicators, but there was little group work. ME activities don't fit with the situation in the field.
- ME responsibilities and roles are not specified in the description of tasks.
- In relation to the role of individuals in monitoring their own activities, there should be a distinction between indicators and impact; impact measurements are important because they can motivate people.
- Advice to be given to the head of ME :
 - i. Monitoring must be systematic, the ME head should get out of his office and make contact with his colleagues if he is to get a grasp of qualitative data ;
 - ii. The work plan must be properly worked out so that it includes a good ME system ;
 - iii. The role of the head of ME should go beyond information supplied by the technical staff.

Sub-Theme 3 : Evaluation of the System :

- The ME office has never been subjected to either formal or informal evaluation ; nor has there been any presentation of the system.
- Role and competences of the UI: ME is a specialised discipline, and the Unit should be able to provide technical staff with advice so that they can reorient their activities, react, and participate in the drawing up of the system.
- The ME process requires greater dynamism ; recommendations should be made to assist technical staff. The problem is not the collection of information but its processing, and the capacity of the head of ME to give advice and suggest new directions.

Workplans : No one in the Unit has a workplan within the Unit but everyone refers from time to time to the CAE Workplan.

Internal and External Interaction :

- The team has not had any opportunity to select objectives and indicators in normal fashion, e.g. in a 'programme presentation workshop'.
- Information : the team receives data in documentary form or via the intranet. Internally: there may informal exchanges several times a day, and meetings every now and then.
- Interaction with other colleagues at the Centre: regular meetings are needed, since everyone must be equally well-informed.
- It should be used to give and receive information ; a computerised outlook calendar could be considered.

2. Training-Communication Unit :

Definition of the concept : a method of seeing from CAE level what actions the Unit should be undertaking. A measure of the development of activities, which requires concrete information (measurable data).

Sub-theme 1 : Contribution to the design of the system :

- Cooperation with ME requests is like that with any other Unit. Example : The training-monitoring methodology, where new headings were added to the evaluation form for USAID purposes (sex and profile of participants). ME is asked to monitor particular courses.
- Collaboration (advice) when the forms for client management were created.
- Though the ME role and responsibilities of the Unit do not appear in task descriptions, collaboration between UFC and ME office is complete.

Sub-theme 2 : Involvement in Implementation

- The ME office is informed of all UFC activities; the head of ME is often invited to take part in training sessions. Information-flow between the two units is good, on a monthly and quarterly basis.
- The collaboration between UFC, ME and UI is close and should be the model for other Units. But nothing could be further from the case, because the ME head is considered in the light of a controller of other Units' activities.
- If real collaboration is to be established, the Strategic Work Plan must be ignored; it is the source of all the problems. The technical personnel is worried that it isn't good enough and will receive unfavourable evaluations, whereas the Workplan was worked out on the basis of the contributions of every member of the team.
- There are reports on training-monitoring; this is a form of retrospective evaluation in which advice and specific support can be given.
- The UFC team's proposal for systematic monitoring of its Unit is primarily that of inviting the ME office to acquaint itself with all the UFC activities specified in the workplan.

Sub-theme 3 : Evaluation of the system

- There have been many dialogues and suggestions between the two units about the improvement of the system, and most of these have resulted in change.
- To improve the effectiveness of the system, the head of ME is advised to show a great deal of tact and diplomacy in discussion with his interlocutors. He should also put the workplan aside in ME relations with other Units, and use a pedagogical approach. The vital thing is to help the technical staff to draft their

reports better. In this respect, it was drawn to the consultant's attention that certain reports were written directly in English and then communicated to the ME office only after translation. Other reports drafted in French are translated into English and then retranslated into French.

Workplan :

The UFC draws up its workplan monthly. It includes the following points :

- Two activities per month are scheduled for Bamako and the regions ;
- Missions are undertaken in the Regions for post-training-course mini-evaluations ;
- One-off activities.

This workplan is approved within the UFC itself and communicated to the Administration.

Interactions :

- Interaction between the UFC and other Units is unproblematic ;
- As to the interaction there should be between ME and the other units, the UFC view is that the other units must give their feedback to the head of ME, who is, after all, merely an executant like any other and not a giver of orders. Problems arising in the ME field should be solved by ME and not by COP. UFC has noted that staff do not necessarily make themselves available to the ME office; this is because people are afraid of being critically evaluated. The result is people claiming 'paternity' of actions.

3. Policy Analysis Unit :

Definition : Monitoring-evaluation must make it possible to verify the effectiveness of the means used to attain objectives and to verify the effectiveness and relevance of the project. Monitoring therefore reflects the actions undertaken by the project's agents on a daily basis, and serves to assess the tendencies the project's products have induced in partners and clients.

Sub-theme 1 : Contribution to the setting up of the system :

- The UAP keeps the whole team informed on a monthly basis of the state of completion of the Unit's activities and on the work awaiting attention ;
- No other method or documentation is used for informing the team with the exception of discussions which took place in February 2000 concerning the circulation and destination of client requests made to the CAE (no one knows whether such requests have been accepted or not) ;
- The UAP's competences in ME are not made clear in task descriptions, but it has already assumed a role in ME, since the UAP's activities are undertaken in close collaboration with the activities of the other units.

Sub-theme 2 : Involvement in Implementation :

- Monthly production of an activities report distributed throughout CAE combined with a monthly document on activities in progress.
- Impediments to implementation noted include the imprecision of the terms of reference of the head of ME, the terms do not allow him to require Units to send him various mission or technical reports and the terms of reference of studies etc. The ME office should analyse these reports to measure impact.
- The tasks and activities of the UAP are precise and easy to monitor; they are monitored daily by the Unit head. Evaluation is a more complex issue, since the question is to what extent the CAE, via the UAP, helps to remove policy constraints that inhibit the CAE from attaining its objectives. The UAP can only prompt, or propose strategic steps, or bring its assistance to bear till an action is complete. In this context, the ME office must necessarily assist the UAP in analysing the impact of its activities.

Sub-theme 3 : Evaluation of the System :

- The UAP is often consulted about the improvement of the system and has given its advice for example about the production of conjunctural impact analysis notes by the ME office in addition to quarterly and annual reports, in order to suggest orientations and, if need be, give new directives ;
- Greater effectiveness would require more frequent technical meetings (monthly) and meetings of the whole staff.

Interaction :

- The unit comprises just one person and interacts essentially with the UDC and the CAE's various partners ;
- Interaction with the UI takes place primarily on the basis of specific dossiers ;
- In general, it seems that the more advanced a project, the less information is available, because the staff-members are all taken up by their own activities. With better circulation of information, the UAP could bring its activities more directly into line with those of other Units ;
- The Information Unit should be the leader in the matter of circulating information, by making more systematic use of the intranet ;
- The ME office should produce a sort internal newspaper ('Information Flash') on a monthly basis, which would make it easier to distribute information efficiently. In general, it is important to set up regular meetings for the whole CAE staff.

4. Partners Fund

Definition : monitoring-evaluation is a system for measuring overall objectives. Intermediary results must also be measured in order to assess whether the CAE's activities are relevant and effective relative to its objectives. Monitoring-evaluation therefore serves to avoid gaps. Monitoring is done in advance, evaluation after the end.

Sub-theme 1 : Contribution to the setting up of the system :

- Chemonics has devised a plan ; the head of the Partnership Fund did not herself set it up, but took part in the analysis of the system that evaluated how well it matched up to reality.
- With this initial system set up, just as it was necessary to develop the Partnership Fund terms of reference in order to improve grasp of the roles and responsibilities of all the interested parties, now we need to specify the contributions and define the tasks of each member of the CAE team in the framework of this plan.

Sub-theme 2 : Involvement in the implementation of the system :

- The involvement of the head in drafting the terms of reference with a small committee should be systematised; similarly, the head of ME should be systematically be informed of the signature of contracts with partners ;
- Impediments : until the tasks of the head of ME are clarified, impediments will remain. In the meantime, he should perhaps be informed of all sub-contracts, in order to ensure better monitoring ;
- The Partnership Fund has its own methods for ensuring monitoring-evaluation of its activities : a control panel that specifies all sub-contracts, sub-contractors, dates and remarks ;
- The activities of the head of the Partnership Fund are not widely known within the CAE team, despite her having taken part in a lot of 'think-tank' work. She wonders whether the division of CAE into Units is suitable, given its objectives and activities.

Sub-theme 3 : Evaluating the system :

A small group gave thought to this subject as part of a larger topic: the circulation of information in the CAE. Another aspect of her involvement in the setting up of the system was her contribution to the drawing up of the note on monitoring-evaluation strategy.

Workplan :

The workplan is drawn up on a weekly basis in informal style, so that she alone knows its content, which consists of monitoring the sub-contracts in financial terms (costs, timescales). This is closer to management control than monitoring in the strict sense of the word.

Interactions :

- Interaction with the other Units (UDC, UAP, UI) are required by the very nature of the Partnership Fund's activities. All terms of reference are centralised at the Partnership Fund and in part at the UFC ;
- Setting up clear monitoring and evaluation systems would facilitate the circulation of information, as would fixing performance indicators and drawing up a precise workplan.

5. The Administration

Definition : Monitoring-evaluation is a mechanism for measuring gaps between what has been achieved and what was planned, and for the interpretation of these gaps such that activities can be brought back into line.

Sub-theme 1 : Contribution to setting up the system :

No contribution required or made.

Sub-theme 2 : Involvement in implementation :

- The internal transmission record makes it possible to monitor internal mail and allows everyone to situate mail ;
- The basic document for taking stock of activities is the workplan. The Administration workplan is established on a quarterly basis. It should be noted that translation and filing of reports is the business of the Administration. It would be better to use e-mail to send documents in order to minimise transmission time and thus ensure better monitoring ;
- Work pressure and stress are the two main impediments to the systematic implementation of the system; priorities take first place, and 'everything is urgent'. It is therefore all but impossible to follow the plan; everything seem improvised because the technical units organise their work at the last minute and the Administration has to follow suite. Emergencies are therefore the rule in the working of the Administration ;

- To improve the implementation of the system at Administration level, and, by extension, throughout the CAE, there would have to be a quarterly or monthly work schedule and the Administration would have to be informed in time. The Administration feels that there is a communication problem with the Unit heads, which helps to make circulation of information more difficult.

Sub-theme 3 : Evaluation of the System :

- The Administration doesn't know what it should give the ME office apart from its own activity reports, for example the cost monitoring of the October 98 and December 99 training sessions. The Administration notes a lack of coordination between the other Units, especially when it comes time to ask for the training budget to be submitted. This becomes impossible when, as now, the UFC is neither informed of all the training programmes initiated by the Units nor involved from the start ;
- One improvement would be to restore the system of monthly meetings, were it only in order to plan training properly.

Workplan :

The workplan is difficult to draw up for the reasons given above. To this should be added the fact that terms of reference of the admin personnel are those established at the time of recruitment, whereas the content of the posts has changed. This creates problems of overlapping competences. An updating of terms of reference is absolutely vital.

Internal interactions : objectives are decided during monthly and *ad hoc* meetings. The interested parties assert that information circulates well within the Unit.

External interaction : information moves from heads down to subordinates.

6. Information Unit :

Definition : a classic definition : the evaluation of the results of an activity consists in measuring the extent to which objectives have been realised. Monitoring the performance of activities is essential to evaluation because it makes it possible to collect all the information about the execution of an action.

Sub-theme 1 : Design of the system :

- The Information Unit asked for the participation of the whole CAE team in the drawing up the strategy of monitoring-evaluation, and in the setting up of the various data-bases ;
- The methods used to do this were UI meetings for the production of documents. After the division of the Centre's activities, a basic enquiry was proposed. The contact, partner and mission forms were drafted ;
- Evaluation is carried out by financial backers and not by the ME office, though the head of ME is of course the point at which information is centralised; but everyone must be involved.

Sub-theme 2 : System implementation :

- Implementation is done by use of the request and contact forms; this is about support for small processing units. An action plan is drawn up on the basis of these forms, the person responsible for commercial contacts takes part in this activity ;
- The head of ME must be involved (involve himself) at every stage of all the Centre's activities ;
- The lack of clarity in the terms of reference of the head of ME constitutes the main impediment to the effective implementation of the system ;
- Furthermore, there needs to be leadership not only within or at the head of each unit, but a team-leader for the entire CAE team. This job normally falls to the personnel manager ;
- The main monitoring and evaluation method applied in the UI is the weekly individual workplan, which is drawn up at the weekly meeting at the end of the week, and the quarterly workplan of the Unit as a whole ;
- Activities undertaken by the UI seem to be known to some but not all colleagues.

Sub-theme 3 : Evaluation of the system :

- The evaluation of the system is performed almost daily via the activities of the UI. The system is always being questioned ;
- Effectiveness would require that everyone understood the concept of monitoring-evaluation, that everyone understood that monitoring-evaluation is the business of the entire CAE team and not just of the head of ME. Additional factors would include good communication policy and practice within the CAE, planning activities with better ME in mind, a proper grasp of the data- collection instruments, and everyone's collaboration in drawing up the forms specifically linked to their activities, etc.

Workplan :

- The work plan is drawn up on a weekly basis for individuals and a six-monthly basis for the Unit ;
- The Unit head approves the workplan.

Internal Interaction :

- It should be noted that the UI is the only unit with a task-allocation matrix allowing each person's responsibilities in the execution of the various activities of the Unit to be clearly situated. Everything is decided and done on a collegiate basis inside the Unit : planning of objectives, indicators, and monitoring and the formulation of remarks on the results ;

- Working and collaborative relations are excellent in the Unit; tasks and responsibilities are properly shared out, the terms of reference of all the Unit's members are well drafted and up-to-date relative to the changes in the tasks ;
- Information is 'second nature' within the Unit, it is so systematic.

External Interactions :

- Theoretically, relations with the other Units should be exactly like those within the Unit, unfortunately this is not the case with all Units, because for the moment collaboration with the UI and by extension with the CAE happens more by affinity than through groupings of shared competence ;
- Other Units should have permanent daily interactions with the ME office, and not on as and when the situation requires ;
- To improve circulation of information between the Units, the Units should be dismantled, so that the members of the CAE team find themselves in a single entity, the CAE, under a main leader.

REPORT OF MISSION TO NIONO-KOUTIALA-SIKASSO

1. Objective of the mission :

To organise and conduct a group interview with the Sikasso Pool, interviews with Nyeta Conseil and Afrique Verte, and perhaps, in Koutiala, with the village and cooperative associations targeted, in order to :

1. evaluate their contribution to the selection of performance indicators ;
2. to analyse the evaluation and monitoring instruments and methods set up for them, with a view to strengthening and improving them so as to enhance the effectiveness of CAE support.

2. Results :

A contribution to the improvement of the monitoring-evaluation system of the CAE, and in particular the design of a methodology for the constitution and use of an efficient system of indicators, and an enrichment and restructuring of data-collection documents.

3. How the Mission Went :

A. Niono :

A work session was held on the premises of Nyeta Conseil with the Coordinator of the Test Operation for Improving Rice Quality, Monsieur Yacouba Coulibaly. Monsieur Mohamed Haïdara, the Afrique Verte Coordinator, was at Bamako, and will be interviewed on my return from the mission.

The Coordinator was asked questions for the most part about identification of areas of aid for the Groupement and the participation of the Groupement in setting up the systems for the monitoring and evaluation of the Rice Test.

1. By way of introduction M. Coulibaly emphasised that there was no overall vision of the organisation of the CAE and that he had not yet had any contact with the ME office.
2. Concerning the identification of spheres of assistance and collaboration with the CAE in the context of the Rice Test, Nyeta Conseil in partnership with Afrique Verte submitted a technical tender according to the terms of reference drawn up by the CAE. The areas of collaboration were therefore fixed by the CAE too. The Groupement Nyeta Conseil/Afrique Verte was selected as sub-contractor for the Rice Test Operation.
3. Relative to the indicators intended to allow measurement of the technico-economic *référénts* and the value added during this operation, monitoring forms for this purpose are now being drafted.
4. Planning of activities is conducted in close collaboration with the CAE, the CAE is associated with all stages of realisation, decisions are taken with the approval of the CAE via its representative Monsieur Amadou Sylla. The instruments used to inform the CAE depend on the level of support needed ; telephone or official letter. The reaction of the CAE to support requests is often swift.
5. There is no support for the planning of activities ; everything is negotiated and arranged gradually according to the timetable of activities. Meetings take place at the request of either the Groupement or the CAE ; minutes are produced at the end of the meetings by the CAE representative. The main document used for monitoring and evaluation is therefore the contract binding the two parties.
6. The organisation of a monitoring mission is coordinated with the CAE: the Groupement makes internal preparation before the arrival of the CAE executives, followed by the field mission itself, then there is a debriefing. Future missions are decided on at the debriefing.
7. The system established by the Groupement to ensure the performance and monitoring of activities: at the base are monitoring agents and investigators who supervise the sites and a permanent agent who coordinates their activities; he is supervised by the technologist and the marketing specialist, while the Coordinator manages and ensures the cohesion of the whole (a monitoring form is being prepared currently

in collaboration with the CAE). The Coordinator acts as 'Quality Police' and tours the sites to verify the information provided by the various agents. Coordination meetings are also planned and can be requested from any level of the team. It should be noted that this system was set up expressly within the framework of the contract with the CAE.

8. The reports sent to the CAE at each stage do not have a predetermined structure. The first report comprises the following headings : Summary of collection of paddy, selection of sites, types of protocol of collaboration, and outline marketing projects. The Coordinator is responsible for the production of reports. A committee has been set up within the CAE to validate the reports within the week. The head of the Partnership Fund has made it her responsibility to communicate the CAE's observations to the Groupement.
9. The Groupement is expecting the CAE to make its systems more flexible in order to improve efficiency in the field. This would mean simplifying tendering arrangements, instituting a system of advance payments, direct payment of small amounts, payment by cheque for large amounts, etc.

B. Koutiala :

The Koutiala stage of the mission was abbreviated because the persons to be interviewed (training officer, AGA official) were on mission and contactable only at Bamako after their return.

An informal interview with a cereal exporter who has received CAE training was carried out. The exporter was very satisfied with the courses, which enabled him to improve his working methods and master his costs.

C. Sikasso :

- a. **Meeting with AMATEVI**, represented by Messieurs Mahamadou Coulibaly, the Coordinator, and four team leaders, Bourama Goïta, Zakaria Diarra, Yaya Maïga, and Mohamed Diarra.

AMATEVI is a sub-contractor working to support the improvement of potato conservation.

1. Indicators were worked out in part by the Association, in part by CAE. During the Test, other data will be highlighted for use in evaluating the comparative impact of the two systems, traditional and improved : weight of potatoes in the two systems at the start of conservation, sorting and weighing (rejects) during and after conservation.
2. The indicators were selected on the basis of the Association's experience in this area. AMATEVI has been active since 1986 and has analysed the interactions between the different constraints on potato-growing, and has come to the conclusion that the problems are essentially linked to the peasant-farmer's lack of financial resources; hence the quest for a financial partner for the conservation improvement test and the choice of the CAE.
3. Monitoring and evaluation plans were made according to the timetable of growing seasons, practice in this area and the Association's own experience.
4. The monitoring system : four field agents (extension workers) between them ensure support for 27 villages (to date, tuber treatment has occurred in 17 villages). Monitoring and support consist in contacting peasant-farmers in their homes or fields ; advice and awareness-enhancement is done on the basis of chatting and discussions. The extension workers come to Sikasso every week to give an account of their activity. The Coordinator also conducts impromptu checks and sample verification in the villages supported by the project. Radio messages are sent before the Coordinator's field visits.
5. Six activity reports must be submitted by AMATEVI at each stage of the operation. Each report must have a well-defined content with predetermined indicators : distribution of cases, monitoring of conservation, sorting and weighing to compare the two systems, monitoring of marketing, value-added difference between the two systems, higher incomes, etc.
6. The contribution of the Association to the final evaluation of the operation will be to measure the technical standard of the producers and the comparative impact of the two systems, the final objective being the regulation of the potato market.

b. Crédit Initiative SA : Sub-contractor in the financial management of support for the Sikasso Mango Exporters Pool.

1. Instruments for monitoring the services of CI SA : terms of reference, a plan of disbursements per ten-day period is submitted to CAE for authorisation, report every ten days, monthly report with account-statements, financial statement, and the operation's trading account by telephone or fax.
2. The role of CI SA is essentially to see that the disbursements are made in orthodox fashion in order to ensure the financial security of the operation. At the same time, data is collected on the lacunae and problems in the branch.
3. Monitoring system : visits, working sessions, system of trader management, planning of disbursements at the same time as activities are timetable (collection, processing, packaging).

c. Mango Exporters Pool :

1. The Pool submitted to the CAE a project for supporting mango exports; this was approved but the budget halved because of the CAE's lack of funds. At the Pool's request, the funds made available are managed by CI SA for insurance purposes, as the fruit and vegetable export sector apparently had a reputation for 'disappearing' funds.
2. The Forecast Operating Account, established on a weekly basis, has been revised. Disbursements are made every ten days on production by the Pool of documentary proof of expenditure.
3. The Pool complains that it cannot work smoothly given the problem of intermittent financial provision and states that it broke all contacts with the CAE a month ago. Moreover, according to the Administrator, the Pool was never consulted about the terms of reference of CI SA and rejects CI SA's systems.
4. Monitoring documents : The Pool refers to the documents used by CI SA. The main, indeed only, instrument for monitoring the Pool's activities is the Forecast Operating Account and the ten-day activity reports drawn up and validated by the Administrator. To date, the Pool has submitted to the CAE a single report covering the first three periods of ten days. The content of this report is not that agreed with the CAE.

d. Recommendations :

- ♦ In the area of fruit and vegetable export, in parallel with the monitoring system, a system for ensuring that funds are returned should be set up (commitment to be signed by exporters) ;
- ♦ Check the situation as regards commitments and the starting situation of the sub-contractor (when the protocol was signed). Verification perhaps requires a specialist; specialist should also verify CI-SA's professionalism ;
- ♦ Systematically involve the service-provider or sub-contractor in the drafting of the terms of reference and, *a fortiori*, in the selection of performance indicators ;
- ♦ As with the consultation mission on CAE ME, timetable close-monitoring missions for all test operations;
- ♦ At every stage of activity, make systematic use of specialists (consultants) in the relevant areas, as the CAE does not necessarily possess the relevant competence. This would make monitoring more objective and more systematic.